

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims replaces and supercedes all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A knit design method of creating an image representing a design of a knitted fabric in accordance with an input of a user for generating knitting data used in a knitting machine, the method comprising the steps of:

~~sliding~~ deforming an area having an irregular shape designated by the user in a course direction ~~to deform the area~~ into an area having a ~~simple~~ regular shape;

changing design data of the deformed area in accordance with the input of the user; and

then, returning the area after the change of design data to the original position before ~~sliding~~ deforming.

2. (Currently Amended) A knit design method according to claim 1, wherein the area having an irregular shape comprises an oblique stripe-like portion at an end of the knitted fabric, and is deformed ~~by sliding~~ into a shape in which the longitudinal direction of the area is vertically substantially straight.

3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating an image representing a design of a knitted fabric in accordance with an input of a user, and converting the image into knitting data used in a knitting machine, the apparatus comprising:

means for ~~sliding~~ processing the image to convert an area having an irregular shape designated by the user in a course direction to deform the area into an area having a ~~simple~~ regular shape;

means for changing design data of the deformed area in accordance with the input of the user; and

means for processing the image to ~~returning~~ the area after the change of the design data to the original position before sliding.